

REFERENCE

TEACHER'S ROOM

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HAMMERS, CHISELS AND FILES ARE NECESSARY TO WORK STOCK SALT WHICH IS PRESSED INTO A BLOCK AT 80,000 POUNDS PRESSURE. HERE THE STUDENT HAS MASTERED THE TOUGHNESS OF THE MATERIAL AND GAINED INSIGHT INTO THE PROBLEMS OF THE SCULPTOR. (SEE ARTICLE ON PAGE ONE).

• NORTHERN ARTS • SOUTHEASTERN ARTS • WESTERN ARTS • PACIFIC ARTS



ART EDUCATION

THE JOURNAL OF THE NATIONAL
ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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CONVENTION REPORT NO. 3

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N.B. OPINIONS expressed in signed articles
are those of the writers and not necessarily
those of the National Art Education Association

EXPLORING ART

"...THE STUDENT EXPLORING ART QUICKLY GAINS FIRST HAND KNOWLEDGE"

THE ease with which actual physical manipulation can be used to demonstrate many of the visual arts accounts for the "Let's carve a head," or "Let's paint a picture," attitude which is the participation keynote of EXPLORING ART, an introductory course in the general education program.

The approach suggested here does not exclude the use of visual aids but it does reduce to a minimum the traditional art history approach with the emphasis upon slides and lectures. By this method the student exploring art, quickly gains first hand knowledge of the skill problems of art; the disciplines imposed by materials and a real insight into the intellectual concepts motivating artistic performance.

The course is organized to introduce the student to two and three dimensional arts, specifically drawing, painting, sculpture and the related aspects of crafts such as ceramics, weaving or print making.

The Approach

In general, teachers work from student interest in contemporary art forms. For example, the ubiquitous comic strip, taken from the Exploring Art viewpoint, is an excellent introduction to drawing.

Among the strips can be found the representative, or illustrative artist as well as practitioners of variations of symbolism and fantasy which later can provide an introduction to the notions of abstract art. In addition to problems in straightforward illustration in a variety of media, the comic strip gives rise to considerations of color, decoration, fashion; and, should student interest so indicate, the basic processes of printing can be explored and the class, or individuals, can be directed into a consideration of the essential ideas of engraving, block printing, silk screen, stencil, lithography and the host of variations in modern multiple reproduction processes.

Such commonplaces as coins and cars provide adequate starting points of student interest that lead to considerations of the three dimensional

arts. The coin, presenting the problem of low relief, leads in turn to further exploration of sculpture in the round.

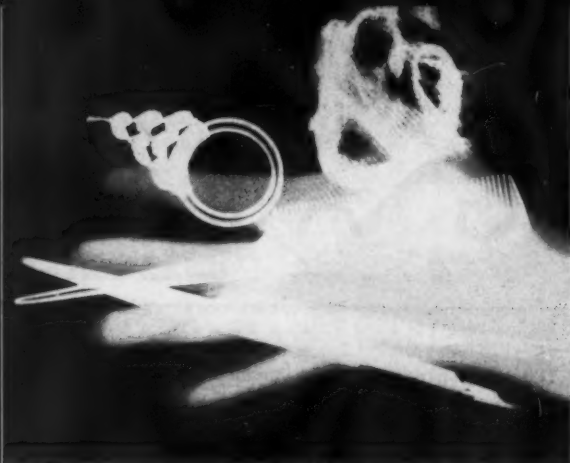
The automobile, designed upon paper, mocked up on armatures of wood in oil clay, provides contemporary analogy to three dimensional problems of interior-exterior space, line, shapes and color. The concepts of three dimensional design remain fairly constant whether the student works in terms of automobiles, abstract shapes, architecture, or a representational head.

Other contemporary matters of interest to students in the area of a three dimensional nature can be found in window display with its abundance of ready-made three dimensional materials, related space problems and their organization; manikins and their construction; or prop materials related to stage designing which in turn leads to architecture, interior decoration and many other genuine modes of expression.

Sculpture in the round can be encouraged from this host of contemporary analogies and it requires but little supplementary guidance to direct the student to meet the challenge of carving plaster, salt, soapstone or even more recalcitrant materials.

Ceramics, too, an art in itself, is an excellent introductory experience for the student moving into a three dimensional world. It is not such a far cry from the morning bowl of Wheaties to a genuine concern for graceful forms, textures and colors provided in the best contemporary ceramics. Such an introductory use of clay can easily lead into relief, carving in the round, or modeling.

Photography, which might have been mentioned earlier as one of the related methods of multiple reproduction in the discussion of the comic strip, is another medium which elicits considerable interest and through its ramifications can develop in a variety of ways. It may be appropriate to mention here that simple contact prints, the photogram, created with ready made materials such as keys, string, wire and coins, to name a few of the many possible materials, can serve readily to introduce the stu-



THE PHOTOGRAM, A DIRECT CONTACT PRINT, ENABLES THE STUDENT TO EXPERIMENT IN READY MADE DESIGN FORMS AND BECOME ACQUAINTED WITH SOME ASPECTS OF PHOTOGRAPHY.

dent to a host of two and three dimensional problems in design, as well as to acquaint him with the most common visual tool of contemporary civilization.

Thus, photography, ceramics, weaving, and other processes acquaint the young explorer with the problems of line, shape, color and texture. The alert teacher, by offering acquaintanceship with these arts, enables the student to gain some knowledge and skill in mediums about which he may have been curious and thus open the doors to new worlds of personal enrichment.

Whenever feasible the practical applications of the skills are applied to problems immediately connected with school and life activities. The school newspaper and other publications, festivals, assemblies, dramas and a host of other student projects provide ready material for immediate concern with art problems.

Some Considerations

The limitations of time set boundaries upon the possibilities of exploration. The usual college offering of one hour per day for a period of eighteen weeks, two weeks for a project seems to offer both a minimum as well as a maximum period of ten hours for a specific experience such as design or painting. Special interests can be carried out outside the classroom.

The limitation, however, is not so great that the student is denied the opportunity to discover whether his interest is such as to warrant a more intense study at a later date. The intent of the offering is to open doors, not to perpetuate a series of short, busy-work projects which can be extended indefinitely.

Depending upon the abilities of the teacher and the attitude of a group of students, the ex-

periences offered can be rigidly arbitrary or a truly exploratory adventure with the interest of students guiding the progression of activities involved.

It should be noted that the problem of mechanics in handling students in this adventure will play a definite part. The discipline of materials may indicate that the best experience can be obtained by moving as a group. Small groups will, naturally, lend themselves to a considerable variety of problems developing simultaneously, depending upon student interest.

Finally, good planning of a variety of experiences is essential to truly explore the major aspects of visual arts in two and three dimensions. However, the actual chronology, or progress of exploration is varied by the personal interest of students. A teacher may easily discover that he is working in sculpture one hour and making block prints the next. But variety of experience is the nature of exploration.

THE READILY CARVED SOAPSTONE OFFERS THE STUDENT AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN SCULPTURE AS WELL AS INSIGHT INTO THE PROBLEMS OF CARVING A MORE DIFFICULT MEDIUM.



TOWARD A PHILOSOPHY

The themes of the four regional conventions are not startlingly new, nor are they especially exciting in so far as novel approaches are concerned. But they are sound, pragmatic and worthy of consideration. Beyond these virtues the proposed discussions reveal the persistence of an undertone which has been felt in American art education for some time.

A further virtue of the programs as planned is that new technics are being used to focus attention on the implications of the themes. Among these, and very noticeably, to the application of group dynamics toward a democratic understanding of our common problems and beliefs.

EASTERN ARTS will consider **Art Education in a Scientific Age**. Indeed this is a portentous theme that may have profound meaning for art and children. Should the arts act as a balance wheel? Should they act as antidotes? Should they adopt the method of scientific inquiry and of the science laboratory? Should they make greater use of the findings of the sciences which deal with human behavior and growth? It will be interesting to see what direction the discussions and addresses will take. Surely, the stimulating effect will have some tangible results and perhaps point to new directions.

WESTERN ARTS has dedicated itself to the task of rediscovering **Experiences in the Arts for a Free Society**. Here again we are confronted with a task that involves careful definition and analysis of **experience**, and of a **free society**. Experiences differ, and the meaning of a free society has adherents of various shades of intensity and meaning. But more important is the fact that group dynamics are here employed to a degree and in a manner that should make all participants "feel" the meaning of a free society as well as of "experience" as mode of expression. All of this adds up to a number of implications for the arts in the classroom: shall it be dictation and direction, or free discussion and choice?

SOUTHEASTERN ARTS has already adjourned and perhaps the participants have answers to the chief problem: **Arts and Crafts in the School and Community**. To what extent does the art program we advocate have effect upon children in school and in the community? What does it do to growing boys and girls, creatively and as persons? What happens to our homes, our schools, our social life, our group inter-relations, etc.? Are we beating the air or are we sincere in what we are saying? It is a down to earth theme; in a democratic society we need to answer the question in unequivocal terms if we are to continue to deserve the support of administrators and of the public.

PACIFIC ARTS asserts affirmatively that **Art is a Way of Living**. It will be interesting to see the supporting evidences of Dean Haggerty's now famous dictum. There are areas of human experiences which all individuals are bound to face: home, community, church, work, play, school. Is the art program making contributions to these areas? Does art make a difference in people, homes, community? The similarity between the Southeastern approach and the Pacific theme is significant.

We repeat, there are trends that seem to re-echo our statement of beliefs. They are becoming a part of a creed, a philosophy for American art education in days of confusion and uncertainty.

If we have interpreted clearly the spirit of convention themes, then we should be satisfied in the knowledge that we are agreeing on major emphases.



HAROLD LINDERGREEN



IVAN JOHNSON



CATHERINE BALDOCK

Prize Contests and Competitive Exhibitions in Art Education

AN APPRAISAL BY TWO DISTINGUISHED ART EDUCATORS
AND A REPORT BY A NATIONAL COMMISSION

It is quite consistent with the American way of doing things to organize large, competitive exhibitions for students of the visual arts. It is characteristic to have these activities organized, not only on a city-wide and state-wide, but also on a nation-wide scale; also to have them sponsored privately or by



THOMAS MUNRO*

big business rather than by the schools themselves or by any government agency. An appeal is often made to commercial firms to help in the project. This help is sometimes given on a basis of frankly commercial self-interest, as by firms which sell art supplies to schools

and individuals. Sometimes it is done to develop good relations with the public, as when a department store offers wall space or show windows free of charge to the local exhibition. Much of the work in selecting, preparing, shipping, and judging the exhibitions is done by art teachers, either as a part of their regular work or as a voluntary contribution after school hours. These projects draw out much friendly, public-spirited cooperation among the various groups involved.

From the standpoint of an art museum's educational department, I have had the opportunity to observe local activities of this sort for a number of years, and to participate in judging local entries. I have taken part in many discussions of the merits and demerits of student competitions, and have had to decide how much (if at all) the museum children's classes should participate in them by sending entries. As far as such participation was concerned, my decision

was negative. As to the effects of large competitions on public school art, my attitude is somewhat divided, but again rather negative on the whole. There are advantages, but I think they are outweighed by the dangers.

Let us begin with the advantages. Chief of these is the value of arousing wider interest in visual art production, both within the schools and among the general public. There is no doubt that the prospect of a competition and of consequent fame and fortune stimulates many students to special effort. American youth is active and eager, and takes naturally to competitions of all sorts. They are one way in which merit is discovered and talented individuals rise to the top in our mobile, democratic society. There is general faith in the fairness and expertness of the judging. Awards are a source of pride to winners, but the unsuccessful are usually not too down-hearted; if still ambitious, they resolve to try another time.

Education in the visual arts has always been a minor, subordinate subject in American education as a whole, and has had a precarious foothold. Administrators and teachers of other subjects often wonder what is going on in the art classroom, and whether it is worth the time and expense. An exhibition of student work which they can admire goes far toward convincing them that art is worth while in the liberal curriculum. Of course, the type of art exhibited must be conservative and obvious enough for the layman to appreciate, if this happy result is to be achieved. When an exhibit is city-wide or state-wide, still greater attention is attracted to the place of art in the American school. Newspapers comment favorably, and the general public praises the work of its young artists, especially if the work is reassuringly "sane" and not freakishly modern. In the long run, neither

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art education nor art as an adult profession can flourish without a large, interested public. Large-scale competitions are one way of building up this supporting public in the United States. As such they will have many indirect values.

Another obvious advantage of the competition is to bring recognition and opportunity to successful competitors. Prize-winners are encouraged and made self-confident; many of them are influenced by success to adopt a career in one of the many new fields of art which now provide a livelihood. Prize-winners are favorably noticed by commercial art directors and others with opportunities to bestow.

The disadvantages are those which attend any large-scale, popular, semi-commercial enterprise in the arts. There is a strong tendency to praise and reward types of product which please established, conservative taste. The governing tastes and standards are, on the whole, those of conservative, academic art teachers. Advance-guard, experimental tendencies are not likely to receive awards or (if extremely new and unfamiliar) to be placed on view at all. There has been some change in this respect during the last few years. As a result of a half century of museum exhibits, popular magazine articles, and color-print reproductions, the American public is gradually becoming more tolerant toward non-realistic, post-impressionist experiments in the visual arts. This change in taste eventually reaches those who judge school art exhibits, so that they now feel a little safer in approving what used to be considered "wild, crazy modernism." School art standards, of course, are usually more conservative than the advance-guard wing of adult artists. There are doubtless excellent reasons why this should be so.

However, the net effect of the large competitions is sometimes to make it harder for individual teachers to foster in their students individual variation or creativeness along unfamiliar lines. As the annual competition becomes more and more influential, more eagerly anticipated by students and teachers alike, other aims in art education must be more and more sacrificed to it. Not only is the work of individual students appraised from the exhibition standpoint; the success of the art teacher is also appraised more and more on a basis of the number of students' entries from his classes which are accepted and (still better) awarded prizes. The principal of the school is proud of a teacher who turns out prize-winners. The whole school system is proud and pleased when a local boy or girl wins state-wide

or national honors. The pressure is very strong on all other art teachers to concentrate in the following year on producing prize-winners; to train their students for that event by observing and following the methods which have previously won awards. The resultant attitude is very similar to that which is taken in competitive sports. When interscholastic or intercollegiate teams monopolize attention, there is a tendency to forget and sacrifice all other phases of athletics; to neglect athletic opportunities for average students, and to let competitive games and hopes of victory play an exaggerated role in the whole educational picture.

Among the educational aims which tend to be sacrificed in the interest of prize-winning is a deep, wide, and sensitive appreciation of the arts. Everything is subordinated to skill in technical execution. What good does it do a student, in winning a prize, to have spent much of his time available for art work in going to museum exhibitions or in reading about art? Only in so far as he learns something which he can quickly apply in his own studio work. The whole aim of broadening and enriching his powers of appreciation, his whole intellectual and aesthetic development, tends to be pushed aside as negligible.

One of the most harmful features of competitive student exhibitions is the premium placed on slick perfection of technique in the finished product. Student works are most likely to win favor, on the whole, in proportion as they approximate the work of adult professionals. There may be a temptation to copy or adapt little-known works by professional artists, and judges can not be expected to recognize such imitations.

The emphasis on finished, adult technique runs directly counter to one of the major efforts of the last half century in art education: a recognition of the right of children on each age level to produce their own kinds of art. Some of us have fought for years against the assumption that children's art should be judged as a mere clumsy imitation of adult art. We have been trying to show that art expression on each age level, if allowed to proceed along fairly natural, spontaneous lines in response to the child's environment, will have great value for the child himself as a means to personality development. Children's drawings and sculptures on the elementary level are concerned with very different interests and mental problems from those which concern the adolescent, and both are significantly different from the interests and problems of

an adult artist. In forcing children and adolescents to imitate adult art and to learn accepted adult skills as quickly as possible, we run the risk of preventing their own expression at the time, and of hampering their mental development. The result is often to produce a quick, flashy kind of success, which does not lead to continued growth.

Students are easily flattered by awards, and may have their heads turned in a way which is unfavorable to basic progress. There is a tendency for a child or adult artist, having once made a conspicuous success, to go on repeating the same kind of product over and over until it becomes a stereotype. In the process, he is likely to forget his other ideas and ambitions. For this reason, many teachers are opposed to all prizes and competitive exhibitions for students' art. I would not go as far as that, for there are definite advantages to be achieved. But every effort should be made to prevent the crystallization of definite aims and standards which will force or lure every student to conform with them. The only possible hope, if this crystallization occurs, is that a few highly original geniuses will be sufficiently irritated and goaded to revolt against the conventional standards. Academic art education has often acted as an irritant, to impel a radical counter-gesture on the part of original individuals. But only the few determined, mentally tough, combative, and vigorous artists will survive the ordeal. The majority will conform, and may lose all interest in art a little later.

Through putting a premium on slick perfection in the product, competitive exhibits discourage a young artist from the necessary slow, laborious groping toward a personal style; toward his own way of seeing and thinking; his own attitude toward the world. Everything must be rushed into final form by the appointed day. The result is to narrow down the range of effort in art to standardized projects which can be definitely completed within the allotted time.

Again, this runs counter to a major effort of recent art education. When the emphasis is on the use of art for personality development and genuine creativeness, slick perfection in the product is not the only aim. In fact, it should often be given a subordinate place. The art teacher whose approach is not competitive would rather

see in a child's work some evidence of growth in powers of perception and imagination, some sign of keen interest and emotional liberation, of excitement and wonder at the infinite variety of things which are to be seen and made in this world.

Often a child is too impatient to finish any one task in art. He will begin many tasks, and cast them aside half-finished, because some new idea has occurred to him. Such constant experimentation can be carried too far; it can become a habit of never finishing anything, a habit of carelessness and impatience. A teacher may have to insist at times on the student's finishing a given task, or at least carrying it up to a point of adequate realization. American children are all too prone to lose patience after the job has been sketched out; to lack the European child's patient elaboration and polishing of details. Their lives are over-crowded with activities, art materials are plentiful, and the bell is always ringing to stop one task and begin another. But there is a happy medium in this regard, and the happy medium is not attained by subordinating individual experimentation to the hope of a competitive prize.

Many of these disadvantages can be avoided or reduced by wise and careful leadership on the part of those who judge student exhibits and competitions; especially on the part of the juries and administrators who make the final awards and who send out instructions to competitors and teachers. If these individuals are properly warned of the dangers and are eager to avoid them, they can make student competitions a useful tool in the rational development of art education. I am not, therefore, in favor of abolishing them.

But it is asking almost too much of human nature to expect those in charge of a successful enterprise to keep it within limited bounds. The danger is that it will not be sufficiently subordinated in the total picture of art education. If anyone is to keep it properly subordinated, it will probably not be those in charge of the competition itself, for they are usually go-getters, out to sell their services as widely as possible. Student competitions must be kept in restraint by educational leaders who have a broader conception of the goals which art education can pursue in American culture.

AN ATTEMPT TO ANALYZE THE EFFECT OF CONTESTS

Competition has become so much a part of our daily living, that it seems to me important to clarify its meaning and implications for education, in particular art education. Competition goes on everywhere in every healthy society. It does not need to be fostered. The strive for

"more" and "better" takes care of this type of "natural competition."

There is, however, another type of competition which does not grow out of a natural situation but is introduced as an additional stimulus to encourage "natural competition." This type of "forced com-



VIKTOR LOWENFELD*

petition" has become of increasing concern to art educators and educators in general throughout the nation. It seems, therefore, important, to analyze the effect of both types of competition on our children and youth in order that we can more objectively evaluate its place in our educational system.

Natural Competition

In every healthy classroom situation the child feels a part of the classroom spirit. It is, therefore, obvious that he will have a natural desire to improve this spirit by his own contributions. This contribution starts as soon as the drive to express himself in one or another medium is awakened in the child. First, he competes with himself, finding out whether he cannot do better than he has done before. Growth is a continuous competition with one's own standards and achievements. This is the most natural and healthy form of competition, especially at a time where the child does not approach his environment critically and with awareness. The family and the natural classroom situation will already confront the child with competitive experiences which often create difficult problems. The difficulties most often arise from the inability of the child to conceive of achievements of others

beyond his own level, and to cope with them. If parents and teachers do not appreciate the child's own individual contributions on the child's own merits, complications such as jealousy or withdrawal of the child from active participation may result. In creative expression not only the various stages of development differ but also individual modes of expression. Since the child's art activities merely serve him as means of expression and his individual mode of expression may greatly differ from that of his classmate, he may often be unable to conceive of and understand these differences.

The situation somewhat changes when the child grows older and the final product becomes more and more significant. While for the younger child the natural competition in the home and in the classroom often confronts him with difficulties which are beyond his comprehension, for the older child natural competition is one of the best characteristics of a good and creative home or classroom atmosphere. In the upper grades of the Elementary School and further on, the stimulation which children receive from each others' creative approaches is an invaluable contribution to creative teaching. The child is simultaneously exposed to the many different "styles" and modes of expression which he now can evaluate in terms of his own experiences. Such natural competition which is not based on rigid standards creates a most wholesome atmosphere.

Forced Competition

Under "forced competition" I understand the type of competition which does not grow from a natural situation but which is introduced. Usually in forced competition a certain standard must be met and prizes are given as stimulus and reward.

Since teachers are often confronted with this type of competition, an analysis of its educational meaning seems to be important. It is without any doubt that most of the competitions are sponsored with the best intentions. The arguments usually heard are to give the child an additional stimulus to use the utmost of his abilities, and to prepare him for life situations; also in life, competition plays an important part. Competitions further reward him for his efforts. This also is a part which apparently compares favorably with life situations. Some even say that this is a necessary part, because life is not easy and full

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of competition. They say that it would be artificial to protect the child from the struggle to which sooner or later he will be exposed. Finally it is said that the child should see how his work compares with that of others. All this and more is said in favor of competitions.

Let us try to apply these arguments to the child's situation and the meaning of art education. Child art is highly differentiated. It is extremely individual. There are scarcely two children who express themselves entirely alike. One of the important aims of art education is to bring out these individual differences. These individual differences make up the child's personality. A suppression of these differences would inhibit the child's personality. In order to have all children participate in expressing their individual differences creatively, art education emphasizes the freeing process of self-expression and not the final product. Any competition which is based on the final product must immediately have the effect of diverting the attention of the child from the working process to the final product. Such a diversion is most harmful to the child since it confronts him directly with problems of evaluations of the final product which are inconceivable to him. A child which won a high award in one of the recent competitions could not recognize his own drawing. This is by no means rare. Children quickly change and therefore lose contact with their former mode of expression. Another child did not know at all why he won the prize, neither did the other children in the classroom. However, since the child who won the prize drew his animal—which won the award—with the flat part of the crayon, all children in the classroom drew with the flat part of the crayon from then on. Thus the competition not only directed the children's attention to the final product but stimulated them to imitate. This way, they lost confidence in their own ability to express themselves. The child has no understanding why somebody else's drawing won a prize. For him there are no "rights" and "wrongs" in creative expression. If some rigid "standards" are imposed upon him, they will only harm his personality since they will suppress his individual differences. Since the child does not use "techniques" consciously, an emphasis on the final product may make him conscious of "techniques" and take away his spontaneity. Very often the child expresses experiences in his creative products which are not visible even to experienced

teachers, yet they may be highly significant for the child. In competitions, usually the aesthetically beautiful drawings and those which are "original" receive awards. "Original", however, has the connotation of standing out from others by means of external qualities. Those children who express themselves sincerely, but neither originally nor aesthetically never have a chance of receiving awards in competitions. Yet, they might be the children who most badly need creative activities, for they need the freeing of their personalities most urgently. And, of greatest importance, competition is based on the final product whereas the child grows through the creative process.

The best preparation for the child's future life is to give him a "fair chance for a healthy personality."[†] No artificial stimulations—no matter how high the rewards are—can replace the sound experience which is necessary for any creative work.

For the upper levels, that is, when the child becomes more critically aware of himself and his environment, the meaning of competitions may somewhat change. During puberty when the child's attentions grow more toward the final product, it can easily be understood that the final creative work assumes greater significance. Yet, we have to count with another factor which completely counteracts this growing significance. With this growing awareness, during puberty, the youth not only becomes more conscious of the final product, but also of his inability to solve it adequately. We all know that this is the period where most of our youth loses confidence in their ability to draw or paint. Yet, one of the main aims of art education on this level is to preserve creative freedom beyond childhood and make art an activity for all. Shall we then continue to emphasize the dividing line between those who are "gifted" and those who are shaken in their confidence to create? Do we need the added stimulus of "rewards" for the gifted by harming the ones who have not found themselves creatively?

General Statements Concerning Contests and Competition

Competition may be a great incentive—and often also a discouragement—on the professional level. However, it seems a necessity which even there, when we look through the history of art has not always brought out the great genius.

(Continued on page 16)

[†]Main theme of the Midcentury White House Conference; Washington, 1950.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONTESTS AND COMPETITION IN ART

For two days prior to the 1951 National Art Education Association Convention, a committee of ten persons representing many sections of the United States deliberated on the question of Contests and Competition in Art. Its purpose was to formulate a statement of policy on the issue

which would be presented to the members of the National Art Education Association for their consideration.



MILDRED FAIRCHILD*

The Pre-Convention Workshop Committee presented a tentative statement to a session of the convention. The discussion which followed the panel presentation was helpful

to the committee in the formulation of the final draft.

It is the hope of the committee that this statement will serve as a guide to all those concerned with contests in art as they affect the educational experiences of children and youth.

Competition is the process in which individuals or groups seek recognition or reward by testing their skills, possessions or achievements against those of other individuals or groups. Where specific conditions are set with regard to qualifications and rewards the situation becomes a specific form of competition to which the term contest is applied.

So conceived, competitions and contests form a natural means of self-realization and afford opportunities for further growth. This is especially recognized in a free society where all possible opportunity is offered for free, fair, and extensive competition.

So conceived, competitions are also instruments which, by improper use, may thwart self-realization and growth.

In common with educators in all fields, art educators have become increasingly aware of the abuses involved in competitions and contests as conducted on all levels of art experience.

Having made this analysis, the N.A.E.A.'s Committee on Contests and Competition considers

the claims made for the advantages of contests as well as the destructiveness which seems apparent.

Desirable Effects Credited to Contests

1. They serve as a motivating force for art activities—create excitement, interest and variety.
2. They help to prepare students for life in a competitive society.
3. They are used as a means of recognizing outstanding ability and discovering potential leadership in art.
4. They provide means by which exceptionally talented students may further their careers in art.
5. They are helpful as a device for promoting public interest in the art program; the sponsoring of art work by groups and agencies outside of the schools has a public relations value not to be ignored.
6. They give successful contestants prestige and status with their peers,—adding a feeling of security and self-confidence possibly not received in other ways.
7. They provide unsuccessful contestants with incentives for greater endeavor by making them aware of need for improvement.
8. They provide opportunity for participants and teachers to compare and evaluate their work in relation to that of other students, teachers, and institutions.

Undesirable Effects Ascribed to Contests

1. They often interrupt the planned developmental sequence of the educational experience.
2. They often deal with topics outside of the child's interest; the spontaneous interests of the child are at times curbed to make way for imposed projects.
3. They exploit students:
 - a. Sponsoring organizations and agencies are often more interested in returns for themselves and the promotion of their particular objectives than in the considered welfare of the students.
 - b. Time and energy which might be used for more meaningful learning experiences is diverted.
4. They exploit teachers:
 - a. By inducing tensions and pressures.
 - b. By deflecting energies from needs of the class program.
 - c. By imposing, however subtly, compliance and participation against one's own judgment.

*Associate Professor of Art Education, Teachers College, Columbia University and Chairman of the N.A.E.A. Committee on Contests and Competitions.

5. They often breed a false sense of superiority in those who win and an equally false sense of inferiority in those who lose.
6. They inhibit creative expression by setting up standards arbitrarily.
7. They engender an element of tension which is destructive of good human relationships.
8. They emphasize a standardization of skill and technique by giving approval to certain techniques and qualities as superior to others.

Recommendations

1. Contests sponsored by groups outside of the schools should be eliminated in the elementary school. Young children in their formative years are likely to be deeply hurt by elements of competition which they do not fully understand, and for which they do not have a mature perspective.
2. On the secondary school level entry into contests should be limited to art majors or students with a major interest in art.
3. Where participation of youth in a contest or competition is proposed, teachers, supervisors and administrators should consider the following questions.
 - a. Is the purpose of a given contest one which is consistent with the broad purposes of education.
 - b. Is the time, effort and cost involved warranted in terms of the possible benefit.
 - c. Will the time, effort and cost involved interfere with the general progress of the class, school, etc.
 - d. Are the rules clear, the conditions fair and the publicity in good taste.
 - e. Is the contest or competition free from the kind of interest, pressure or restrictions which inhibits the free and full development of children, teachers and other participants.
4. The final decision as to the advisability of entering a contest should rest with each teacher, or better yet, with each child, and no pressure should be exerted against such freedom of choice.
5. In considering participation, the purpose, ultimate values and other issues involved should be discussed with each group of entrants not only to arrive at a decision, but to explore the learning possibilities afforded by the situation.
6. In entering or arranging any contest or competition every possible care should be

taken in the choice of competent judges, aware of the needs and abilities of children.

7. Art educators should assume the responsibility of formulating and communicating an educationally sound point of view on the art work of children and youth to groups which sponsor contests and competitions or which are interested in making use of the art talent of young people in order that the participation of students in these ventures best serve their educational growth and development.

Committee Members: Madge B. Allen, Jack Bookbinder, John E. Courtney, Stanley Drabnowics, Evangeline Heisig, Lola Hinson, Olivia Krause, Eugenia Oole, Julia Schwartz, Kenneth Winebrenner, Mildred L. Fairchild (Chairman).

ASSOCIATION affairs

ERRATUM

Our apologies to Mrs. Howlett for the unfortunate inversion of the first and second paragraph in her article on Correlation in the January-February issue of this journal. Specifically, the Definition should have come first, the Controversy second. In that order, the second paragraph should read: "Although the idea as expressed," etc.

ACCOLADES FOR ST. LOUIS FOLK

Marie Larkin, Herbert Jackson, Marion Quindix (by remote control) and a host of other fine people assembled what we consider the CREAM of St. Louis' cultural interests for a large and lively meeting on "What can we do FOR YOU in 1953." The response, the suggestions, the animation, the *esprit des corps*, were such that we could only be overwhelmed. The next National Conference is bound to be a large success because of the impetus given by the people of St. Louis.

Alfred Bleckschmidt, State Supervisor of Fine Arts for Missouri, has pledged the resources and services of his office; Miss Virginia Lacey of Normandy Schools, not only continues her interest in the Conference but promises to be of



Key Persons on Local Arrangements

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN ST. LOUIS

Perhaps at no time was there such an extended agenda as that which confronted the Council at its recent meeting, February 21-23, 1952. The meeting was also of significance since the presidents of all regionals were present and had ample opportunity to exchange points of view as well as to learn first hand the methods of handling similar problems in widely separated regions.

In so far as the membership is directly concerned the following digest of the minutes may serve to keep them informed on the major items discussed by their official representatives:

real help in the implementation of certain phases of the program. The Art Department of the local University under the able leadership of Kenneth Hudson has pledged its support; the public school folks and the Superintendent are with us one hundred per cent. What more could be desired?

MILLER-HOOVER ADDRESS LUNCHEON

J. Cloyd Miller, President of N.E.A., and his charming wife were guests of honor at a luncheon meeting that was well-planned, artistically served and thoroughly enjoyed. Mr. Miller gave us a positive and functional philosophy of art education with such sincerity and good humor that it will be long remembered. We are proud to have the enthusiastic support of the leader of N.E.A.

Dr. F. Louis Hoover, a past president of W.A.A., a member of the Council, and Director of Art at Illinois Normal University, spoke incisively and effectively on a basic art point of view. His address was devoid of generalities; it was an excellent compendium of what we believe in art education.

BEYMER A GRACIOUS HOSTESS

The Luncheon Meeting and its planned program were the result of excellent effort on the part of Rosemary Beymer of Kansas City, Missouri, who presided over the luncheon with grace. The souvenir programs, the favors, in fact everything, expressed a positive art approach that was a credit to the hostess and worthy of N.A.E.A.

Group of Local Leaders



1. They discussed the relationship of N.A.E.A. to UNESCO, the Mid-Century White House Conference on Children and Youth; the projected meeting of the International Convention of the Junior Red Cross in Toronto in August 1952 and the extension of our International School Art Program in connection therewith; finally, our relationship to N.E.A. These were all found to be stimulating and worthy of further as well as of closer cooperation.
2. They reviewed the excellent work of the Committee on Curriculum Materials; planned to improve and extend that work and eventually to disseminate worthwhile materials.
3. They received reports on the work of the Committee on Accrediting which is collaborating with other national groups, and pledged their further support of this phase of the program.
4. They learned of the work of the recently expanded Professional Relations Committee; noted the addition of a member from Puerto Rico; planned for further extension of this effort looking ahead to the 1953 National Conference.
5. They were informed on the work of the National Research Committee and proposed some articulation between regional research groups and the National committee.
6. They accepted the report on the work of the International School Arts Program and noted its growth and effectiveness over a period of five years. Rosemary Beymer is to be highly praised for her work.
7. They received a report from the Committee

on Contests and Competitions and authorized its publications (see this issue) in connection with the FORUM conducted in ART EDUCATION. Dr. Fairchild deserves a great deal of credit.

8. They noted the ramifications of the Centennial Action Program of N.E.A. and pledged cooperation to our sponsor association; pledged their support to Dr. William G. Carr, the new Executive Secretary of N.E.A. while extending appreciation to Dr. Givens who retires at the close of the fiscal year.
9. They expressed enthusiastic appreciation for the excellent spirit shown by St. Louis school and art organizations as well as to those who were chiefly concerned with the



President Goss and Vice President Dix

luncheon meeting and the informal get-together. Marie Larkin and Herbert Jackson of St. Louis were particularly singled out for orchids.

10. They received the reprints of the reports on State Directorships in Art and authorized its distribution for effective results in behalf of art education.
11. They considered plans for a series of Informational Studies that may be developed by local teams as a possible answer to many requests concerning various phases of the art education program.
12. They gave complete support to Miss Helen Copley of Detroit in her work in connection with the summer meeting in that city, July 1-4, 1952. Miss Copley's command of the situation assures us of an excellent conclave.
13. They reviewed the problems, noted progress, made tentative suggestions to help

such areas as state affiliation, state group development, and items of a germane nature.

14. They surveyed regional plans for the National Conference years; compared such plans, suggested alternatives and otherwise encouraged continual study of the problem at the regional level.
15. They considered at length several plans for the eventual employment of a full-time Executive Secretary. For the time being, with certain provisions, the Secretary-Treasurer will carry on until the end of the fiscal year in 1953.
16. They gave a large share of time to preliminary discussions concerning the National Conference in St. Louis, April 1953; the ones were suggested; points of view exchanged.
17. They expended a great deal of energy on discussions dealing with the matter of consolidating some of the activities of regionals and the National: publications, research, and other areas, with a view to strengthening them for the common good as well as to economize by pooling resources devoted to those efforts.
18. They agreed to raise National dues to \$2.00 for the next fiscal year in order to carry on and extend the present services.

Convention Report (No. 3)

(See Jan.-Feb. Issue for 1st Part)

The discussion, while enumerating the many types of activities involved in in-service training and the qualifications of art teachers, centered largely around the elementary classroom teacher.

IV. Administration of the Art Department

1. Aspects of scheduling pupils for art including time allotment
2. Administration and supervision of elementary school art
3. Meeting the expense of art and craft materials
4. The place of art in the elementary schools

5. Cost of instruction in art
6. Building and equipment accommodations for art education
7. Equalizing the art opportunities for all children
8. Administrative recognition of the art education program.

On account of brevity of time, this phase of the program was considered in a limited way. It was recognized that great importance should be attached to the proper equipment of the art room, not only in its structural aspects, but also in relation to the needs of the modern educational program. It was also pointed out that the creation of a background which will be aesthetically satisfying should be one of the chief concerns not only in the planning of new buildings, but in the modification of old ones as well. The movement under way in several cities at this time not only indicates another functional outgrowth of the art program, but it is bringing about the degree of tranquility in the classroom and a respect for property that can be attested by the attitude of pupils within the classroom.

V. Utilization of community cultural resources

1. Community support
2. Community study through art
3. Ways to help parents understand the child
4. Helping parents to understand how art fits into everyday living
5. Public relations
6. Art Museum recognition of the public school art education program

The discussion centering around the utilization of cultural resources revealed many interesting projects which have helped to draw the community nearer to the school, through:

- a. Cooperation with the local press.
- b. Public exhibits of art.
- c. Lectures by supervisors and teachers.
- d. Utilizing the resources of the various types of museums and art galleries, libraries, theatres, stores and industries.

Two general questions of importance asked in questionnaire designed for this purpose:

First: What in your opinion are the three greatest problems in art education today?

Most significant among the answers, fifteen which appear in greatest frequency are:

A clear view of the functions of art in a democratic society.

Understanding the role of art in the growth of the child.

Methods, techniques in working to achieve our real goals.

The appointments of state art directors to spread art education through sparsely settled urban and rural areas.

A clearer understanding of required high school credits necessary for college entrance. (This misconception prohibits many interested students from taking art.)

A close tie-up between the industrial and art departments to stress the creative and to raise the standards of good taste.

Inadequately trained art teachers.

Insufficient supervisory help.

Adequate teacher training in college and orientation of new teacher to her new job.

Uncertainty of function and status of art in the total program.

How to make people aware of the value of art to the individual, the public, administrators, other teachers.

The impact of "formula" approaches to art rather than organic learning through experience techniques.

How to improve the art training of every classroom teacher, so she can participate fully in the creative program.

Difficulty in obtaining materials. Securing and distributing sufficient supplies.

Not enough time for art on the secondary school level.

Second: What are the three greatest needs in art education today?

The following is a list of fifteen most popular answers to this question.

More art teachers with a thorough grounding in art.

Classroom teachers with an understanding of the philosophy and scope of art in education.

In-service training of classroom teachers.

Better understanding among educators of the value of art teaching in the public schools.

Closer support between training colleges and public school supervisors.

Nation-wide study of the physical set-up essential to a functional art room.

More art experiences and more opportunities to observe children in the pre-teacher training program.

Better teacher-education classes in methods

of teaching. Art curriculum building with regard to developmental levels of achievement.

Discriminating consumers. (Since art must become a way of life for millions of people, there should be universal art training.)

More and better in-service training for art teachers.

Recognition of art as a basic force in community living.

Art rooms which are large enough to permit of a more varied and rich art education program.

A more objective study by art educators on what we are educating for.

Consideration by art educators of the social and economic forces that shape the uses of art in the lives of the children they are educating.

A more flexible art program instead of regular scheduled time. This gives the teacher the opportunity to present more varied and interesting art problems, and to use many more materials.

From the foregoing it is obvious that the scope of art education problems is so great that any one of them should be sufficient for a research committee to investigate. Of this we can be certain, that our aims are already so well defined as to show the great influence of art upon the individual, the home, the community, the nation, and the world.

briefs on BOOKS and VISUAL AIDS

The Art of Children. Seventeen full color plates. Introduction and Selection by Richard Ott. Preface by Herbert Read. Pantheon Books, Inc. New York. 1952. \$6.50.

A portfolio 11 by 14 inches in size with seventeen color plates and five pages of text under the title, *The Art of Children*, has just been added to the already existing large number of similar volumes. This time, the publication is a translation of a shortened German text. The author, Richard Ott, conducts classes for children at the "American House" in Munich.

The publishers must have been aware of the fact that a literal translation of the German title: *Urbild der Seele*, that is, Primeval Image of the

Soul, beside being meaningless in German would have been totally incomprehensible to the more factual thinking and speaking of the Anglo-American public. However, as the author mystifies the essence of the child's artistic activity as being "from the substratum of the psyche" or as "psychic explosion" to him, the obscurity of the German title may be fully justified.

Mr. Ott claims that his art educational results are "the outcome of a new concept of art education". In reality the same art pedagogical attitude and results were already known in Germany at least twenty to thirty years ago. This can easily be verified through the books by C. F. Hartlaub, *Der Genius im Kinde*, 1922, (*The Genius in the Child*); Gustav Kolb, *Bildschaffen des Gestalten Als Aufgabe der Volkserziehung*, 1926, (*Pictorial Configuration as Task of General Education*); Phillip Frank, *Das Schaffende Kind*, 1928, (*The Creative Child*); and many others. The fact that his "school does not furnish models of any kind" to him seems to be new. Does he not know that models were given up in all advanced art classes in German schools already twenty years ago? To the greatest surprise of the reader and in contrast to Mr. Ott's own preceding statement, in the same paragraph and in the same breath he says that in his classes "children portray each other or bring flowers which they want to paint, etc." In full contradiction to the Author's "new concept of art education" he actually does use models in his art teaching. It makes little sense.

Another aspect of Mr. Ott's new concept seems to be the fact that his assistants (a mechanic and the other a mason) do not allow the children to experiment for themselves with colors they want to use. The assistants "mix colors for them". Yet these colors, mixed by others, are applied by the children in the process of their "psychic explosion". It makes still less sense.

In spite of the fact that the paintings in the portfolio were chosen for "their artistic quality and not to demonstrate psychological types", nowhere does Mr. Ott offer any definition of that quality. And yet, he continues to explain this quality according to two non-artistic but physical and mental typological differences, originally established by Ernst Kretschmer, the "leptosomic" and the "pyknic" types.

The majority of the paintings in the portfolio show in their linear structure that simple visual clarity and "rigidity" of expression, in other words, that tectonic quality, typical of the child's genuine pictorial production. In strong contrast to the comparatively undifferentiated linear

structure the colors are highly differentiated in their tone values. Through this, these paintings lack the early unity of artistic form characteristic of all unadulterated pictorial results of children. In paintings 14 and 17, however, one finds true artistic achievement of children; line and color relationships reveal the same tectonic qualities and thus form a unified artistic structure through which these children realize and express their ideas.

The repeated contradictory statements and the self-opposing pedagogical practice indicate clearly that Mr. Ott is not an art educator who is able to understand the child's creative nature and develops it according to the child's inborn artistic potentialities. The color plates are obviously "Parade works". Nowhere is there any sign or remark about basic art-educational aspects as growth and development. All this becomes understandable through his own declaration, "By profession, I am a painter". The professional painter is of course so deeply concerned with his own artistic problems that there is little time left for the grasping of the child's creative processes. And yet, as a professional painter, Mr. Ott demands that "art education in elementary and secondary schools" should be "in the hands of artists who practice the arts they teach". If this should ever be realized then one can only wish that future generations may be saved from art education.

Henry Schaefer-Simmern

Director, The Institute of Art Education
Berkeley, California

The Art of Color and Design. Graves, Maitland, New York, Toronto, and London: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1951. New Second Edition, 439 pp., 335 illustrations. \$6.00.

Certainly one of the most pressing problems facing many teachers in the training of artists, is the presentation in an orderly and logical way, those fundamentals basic to the design and construction of all forms of visual expression. The popularity of the first edition of *The Art of Color and Design* attests to the fact that many teachers found their answers in this volume.

The new second edition should prove to be even more popular. It includes a revision of previously used material and the addition of a number of sections to make the book one of the best in its analysis of the elements and principles of

art. The re-designed volume is handsome in every way. It is in itself a successful application of the design fundamentals set forth. Over 150 carefully selected pictures have been added to make the book profuse in material illustrating all phases of the text.

The Art of Color and Design is essentially a textbook for students in art, complete with questions for self-evaluation and special exercises directed toward training in the application of basic principles. The content organization of the present edition is the same as used in the original printing. There are three parts: one, *The Elements of Design*; two, *The Principles of Design*; and three, *Analysis of the Design Elements*; with the greatest portion of the book devoted to the latter two. The section on Unity has been re-organized and developed into a clear and thorough statement of all aspects of this fundamental principle. In fact, all of the material is well-organized, lucidly stated, and developed in a logical manner. Art students will find the book easy to use.

One of the most widely publicized features of the original edition was the Graves Design Judgment Test. This test has been expanded and now includes some three-dimensional as well as two-dimensional items. The new edition also includes a newly constructed Taste Test which involves making choices from pairs of representational items such as; furniture, lettering, painting, photography, and advertising layout. Those familiar with the design judgment test will recall that it deals largely with the formal aspects of design in non-representational items. Both tests may serve as devices for indicating an individual's sensitivity to design and quality of taste.

The Art of Color and Design places major emphasis on the surface qualities of expression as affected by such elements as line, texture, value, color, etc. The teacher and student of contemporary painting will find little that deals with depth, form, and "negative space" as they influence the structure of pictures in a three-dimensional sense. Furthermore, many students and teachers will wish that more attention had been given to subject matter and the representation of ideas as they are integrated in the building of paintings and sculpture.

All in all the book is magnificent, and the

(Continued on Page 16)

AN ATTEMPT

(Continued from Page 8)

Yet, exhibitions are one of the few means in which artists can reveal themselves to others. If we have especially gifted art students in secondary schools, there is no reason why they shouldn't participate in competitive exhibits. Should we, however, concentrate on the few by neglecting the others? No jury can take into consideration the meaningfulness of a work to its creator. It is this meaningfulness which is most important to the development of a healthy personality, especially at a time when the individual's confidence is shaken.

There is another aspect to competitions which needs to be discussed: This is the time consuming effort to prepare for them, and the pressure to meet a deadline. I have seen schools which are constantly geared to work for competitions. The result is: superficiality, emphasis on techniques, and the working for a final outcome. All this overpowers any serious attempt for self-identification of the youth with his own creative experiences. The natural competition which takes place in every good classroom atmosphere remains the most healthy type of competition.

BRIEFS ON BOOKS

(Continued from Page 15)

result of long and careful study. There can be little doubt that *The Art of Color and Design* will long serve as a useful text for all students seriously interested in obtaining a solid background of elements and principles basic to the visual arts.

Harold A. Schultz

Associate Professor of Art Education
University of Illinois

LET'S TALK IT OVER

1. Should regional and National periodicals be combined?
2. Should there be but one YEARBOOK representing all art groups?
3. Should RESEARCH projects be published by regional groups or should these efforts be channeled into the National?
4. If a house-organ is desirable within a regional, should it be:
 - a. Mimeographed (and designed)?
 - b. Photo-offset (and designed)?
 - c. Printed (and designed)?(Economy is the chief angle here)

If you have ideas on these problems why not write the President of your regional association?

"GROWTH THROUGH ART" CONTINUES ITINERARY

The success of the exhibition planned last year is attested by its continued demand. The following is the itinerary to date:

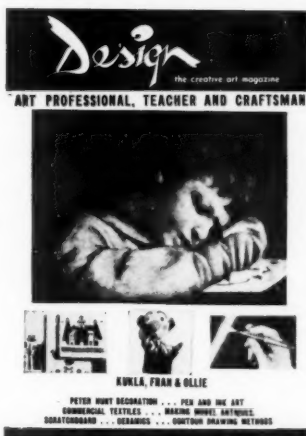
1951

Through December—University of Havana, Havana, Cuba.

1952

Feb. 1-15—University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas; Feb. 22-29—State Teachers College, Troy, Alabama; March 8-24—Midwestern University Museum, Wichita Falls, Texas; Apr. 1-10—Western Arts Assn. Convention, Columbus, Ohio; Apr. 17—Public Schools, San Marcos, Texas; May 8-June 15—Milwaukee Art Institute, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; August 17-31, Public Schools, Seattle, Washington.

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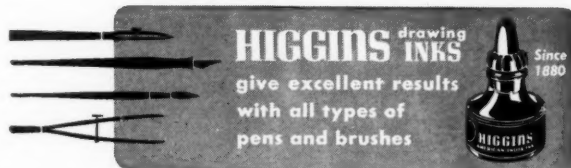
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